

### *Energy and Water Appropriations Conference Includes Costa Amendments to Fund Critical California Water Projects and Ease Regulations to Transfer Water Around The State*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Valley took a step closer to getting additional water supplies today as the U.S. House of Representatives approved proposals offered by Congressmen Jim Costa (D-Fresno) and Dennis Cardoza (D-Merced) designed to increase the availability of water from the San Joaquin-Sacramento Delta to users south of the Delta.

“This is an important step forward,” Costa said. “It is an acknowledgement that Congress is aware of the drought crisis in California, particularly in our district, and is hearing our demands to do something about it.”

The Costa-Cardoza proposals were contained in amendments to a conference report for the FY 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill voted on today.

“We proposed these amendments on behalf of our farmers, farm workers, and farm communities who are at ground zero of the drought. These communities have 30% to 40% unemployment, and have suffered through some of the most difficult situations they have ever faced,” Costa said.

“Our proposals are part of our fight for people involved in these communities and for our local economy as a whole,” Costa stated.

The two amendments will provide drought relief by funding the Two Gates and Intertie projects designed to deal with environmental restrictions as well as addressing impediments to water transfers.

“These amendments are critical during our drought conditions, both those caused by federal regulations and by Mother Nature. The Two Gates and Intertie projects were on the backburner for years, and should have been implemented sooner. However, with this funding,

construction will start next year. The water transfer amendment gives the Bureau of Reclamation the needed flexibility to implement these transfers. This year we transferred over 600,000 acre feet of water that was a critical life line. More needs to be done to protect the Valley's water, and I will continue that fight," Costa concluded.

Costa's floor statement calling for support of the amendments can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Specifically, the first amendment provides \$10 million in increased funding for the California Bay-Delta Restoration Program, which will help fund important water projects such as the Two Gates and the Intertie projects.

The second amendment will expedite transfers between certain Central Valley Project contractors within the South Delta Divisions of the Central Valley Project.

The amendments, as originally offered by Congressmen Costa and Cardoza allowed the water transfers on a permanent basis. The transfers were limited to two-years during the bill conference.

The amendment also directs the Secretary of the Interior to expeditiously revise, finalize and implement the Draft Recovery plan for the Giant Garter Snake. Transfers have often been delayed as a result of the snake.

Congressmen Costa and Cardoza, and Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) will soon be introducing a separate bill to make the water transfers permanent.